

REMARKS:

The present amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance this case to issue without delay.

1. The Examiner's withdrawal of the restriction requirement of 8 October 2002 is greatly appreciated.

2. Applicants also appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment of the papers submitted under 35 USC 119 in support of the priority claim.

3. A minor amendment has been made to the specification by rewriting a paragraph thereof. A copy of this paragraph, appropriately marked to show the change which was made is enclosed. The amended specification does not contain any new matter.

4. Claims 1-20 remain in the case. Claims 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 14 and 19 are amended. The remaining claims have not been altered. The format announced 31 January 2003 has been used.

5. The amended claims are free from all grounds of rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph:

a) The alternative expression previously used in claim 1 has been removed. A single arrangement is set forth.

b) The term "adapted to" has been removed wherever it previously appeared in the claims.

c) The preambles of claims 1 and 19 have been modified to be certain that means has been set forth for effecting a chemical reaction for separating substances.

d) The change suggested by the Examiner at line 7 of original 19 has been made.

Since all of the grounds of rejection under 35 USC 112, second paragraph, have been removed, withdrawal of that rejection is in order.

6. Claims 1-20 have been rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious from a combination of either KAIBEL et al 5,785,819 or KAIBEL et al 5,914,012 in view of STRZELSKI et al DE 31 35 709 A1 or STOUT 5,423,952. The KAIBEL references can be dealt with collectively by referring to KAIBEL generally and will be discussed independently by referring either to KAIBEL '819 or KAIBEL et al '012.

While applicants believe that the claims as originally presented distinguish structurally over this combination of references, claims 1 and 9 and the two independent claims in the case, have been amended to recite a slot on the edge of one of the wall elements (see the slots 3a of FIGS. 1-3 and the slots 3b and 3c of FIGS. 4 and 5) which are capable of receiving an edge of the other wall element. FIGS. 8 and 9 show the two wall elements in coplanar relationship and in mutually parallel relationship with the second element received in the slot of the first and enabling relative

adjustment of the wall elements in planes thereof to enable the partition to span between opposite sides of the column 7.

" The major difference between the claimed invention and the system of the references which have been cited is that not one of the references enables adjustment of the partition to span between opposite sides of a column when that partition is being built into the column so as to compensate for tolerance in manufacturing or the like. That will be perhaps more clear from the discussion below. At this juncture it is important to note that that difference is clearly expressed in amended claims 1 and 19 and is in addition to the differences already recognized between what has been disclosed and what is shown in the art.

The KAIBEL et al '819 reference has a partition formed by two parallel walls which are fixed together and form a hollow space between them. The purpose of this hollow space is to form thermal insulation and to enable gas to be drawn off. " Neither of the two rigid attached walls has a slot^h which receives an edge of the other wall element enabling relative adjustment of the wall elements in planes thereof to enable the partition to span between opposite sides of the column. " *not in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 20th, 21st, 22nd, 23rd, 24th, 25th, 26th, 27th, 28th, 29th, 30th, 31st, 32nd, 33rd, 34th, 35th, 36th, 37th, 38th, 39th, 40th, 41st, 42nd, 43rd, 44th, 45th, 46th, 47th, 48th, 49th, 50th, 51st, 52nd, 53rd, 54th, 55th, 56th, 57th, 58th, 59th, 60th, 61st, 62nd, 63rd, 64th, 65th, 66th, 67th, 68th, 69th, 70th, 71st, 72nd, 73rd, 74th, 75th, 76th, 77th, 78th, 79th, 80th, 81st, 82nd, 83rd, 84th, 85th, 86th, 87th, 88th, 89th, 90th, 91st, 92nd, 93rd, 94th, 95th, 96th, 97th, 98th, 99th, 100th*

The KAIBEL et al '012 reference also discloses a partition but one which has a plurality of wall parts disposed one above the other and not, however, "enabling relative adjustment thereof." While indeed the two wall structures of this KAIBEL et al reference is such that it might facilitate assembly of the column, the reference does not in any way suggest that the two wall elements

What is proposed before said adjustment

is not shown

can be relatively adjusted to enable the partition to span between opposite sides of the column and thus the reference does not suggest the key feature of claims 1 and 19. Indeed, in KAIBEL et al '012, the partition is of fixed width, must have a width that is exactly that of the column interior and is fixed in the column. A change in width is not possible.

The STRZELSKI et al reference discloses assembly of plates for use in a column but it does not form a partition in the sense of the invention nor does it suggest a slot on the edge of one wall element to receive the edge of another and it certainly does not enable relative adjustment as set forth in claims 1 and 19.

The STOUT reference fixes plates at whatever width is necessary (see FIG. 3) and does not have a partition as claimed. There is nothing in either STRZELSKI or STOUT which would suggest modification of either KAIBEL et al to provide a slot in one of the elements receiving an edge of the other to enable the partition to span between opposite sides of those elements.

Thus the combination of references does not suggest what is now claimed in claims 1-20.

Claims 3-18 define how the slot is formed and a careful reading of those claims will show that not one of the slot formation techniques there recited is suggested by any of the four references which the Examiner has now applied. Accordingly, these claims should not have been rejected in the first place and are not properly rejected on the combination of references as applied.

Version with markings to show
changes made.

and preferably coplanar and one of the elements is provided with a connecting device forming a plug or clamp connector along an edge of one of the wall elements so that the other wall element can fit into this connector and more specifically into the slot
5 formed along that edge.

The wall elements of the partition can lie preferably in the same plane and are located one above the other or one alongside the other.

10 The partition of the invention has the advantage that the partition, rather ^{than} being in one piece, can be installed from a multiplicity of loosely assembled wall elements, thereby enabling the partition to be matched individually to the dimensions of the column.

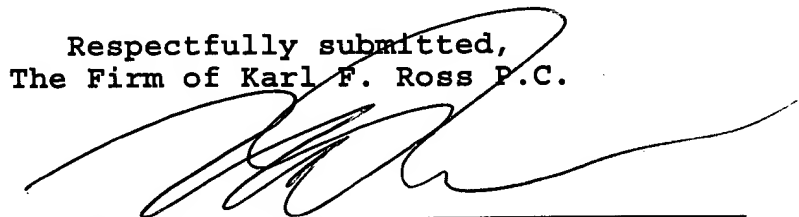
15 The installation of the partition in the column is simplified and the individual wall elements of the partition, because of their relatively small dimensions, can be comparatively light. The partition can be assembled exclusively by manual effort, i.e. without the need for machines, manipulations or hoists, thereby reducing the cost and the risk of injury
20 to the workers involved in installing the partition.

With this type of assembly in place within the column, it is possible to avoid damage to the partition surfaces as well as to the inner wall surfaces of the column. The light weight of the individual parts of the wall assemblies and the relatively
25 small dimensions of the wall elements by comparison with the inner diameter of the column, enables installation without

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Claims 1-20 are thus deemed to be allowable and an early Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,
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Enclosure: Marked up page 4, (lines 9-13)
of Specification